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BENNING'S
BOOK

OF

STRAWBERRIES

1942

W. E. BENNING

CLYDE, N. Y.

PHONE CLYDE 5083



No. 1216

State of New York

Department of Agriculture and Markets

Holton V. Noyes, Commissioner

Certificate of Inspection of Nursery Stock

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the Strawberry Plants of W. E. Benning of Clyde, County of Wayne, State of New York, have been duly examined in compliance with the Agriculture and Markets Law and have been found to be apparently free from all injurious insects, and plant diseases. This certificate is valid until October 1, 1942, unless revoked before that date.

Dated, Albany, N. Y., Sept. 20, 1941.

H. V. NOYES, Commissioner.

A. B. BUCHHOLZ, Director, Bureau Plant Industry.

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

Important

Please Read Before Ordering

We wish to thank those who ordered from us during the 1941 season. We have endeavored to serve you to the best of our ability. We trust that you will again favor us with your order and should you do so, we shall do our best to give you complete satisfaction. All items in the growing, digging and packing of the plants are under our personal supervision. Thus we are in position to know the quality of the plants we send you.

In describing the varieties we grow we endeavor to give a fair and honest description. We do not follow the practice of some in reintroducing old varieties under new names, describing them in exaggerated terms, and selling the plants at a high price only to the disappointment of the purchaser. Bonafide new varieties are listed only after we have proved their worth.

In recent years an increasing number of our customers have come directly to our farm to get their plants. Our place of business is located on the county highway between Clyde and Seneca Falls, about four miles south of Clyde and ten miles north of Seneca Falls, and is plainly marked by signs. If you plan to drive after your plants it is necessary that we be notified two or three days in advance.

All orders are filled with fresh dug plants. These are not grown in sand but in strong, heavy, loamy soil where they develop into fine, stocky well-rooted plants. We receive each year many compliments regarding the size and vigor of our plants.

We take extra care to have our plants true to name, but in case they should prove otherwise, we will not be responsible for more than the purchase price of the plants.

Complaints regarding shortage, etc. must be made immediately upon arrival of plants. If we are at fault, we will make it good.

We shall do our best to serve you and endeavor to ship your plants on the date requested. But if they do not reach you at that date, please remember that the shipping season is short and that many others are waiting for their plants at the same time. Also, since we ship only plants fresh dug each day, rainy and wet weather often seriously interferes with our shipping schedule.

We have customers who have ordered plants from us regularly for many years. This bespeaks the quality of our plants and the nature of our service better than any amount of self-praise.

After about May 10 we do not like to ship plants due to the danger of failure because of the lateness of the season. Orders received after that date will be filled at the purchaser's risk. We do not sell plants in the fall.

Cash must accompany all orders unless other terms are made.

We are not open for business on Sunday.

CULTURAL PRACTICES

The strawberry is not only one of the most popular and delicious fruits but can be grown almost universally. We would advise all who have even a small plot of ground to set some this spring. If you are situated so as to care for a half acre or more, a nice profit will be realized from the venture. The initial cost is relatively small and the profits comparatively large. No other fruit gives such quick returns. City dwellers will find that even a small patch will supply the family with fresh, luscious berries during the season at little expense.

CARE OF THE PLANTS ON ARRIVAL—The package should be opened at once and the roots of each bunch put in water for a few minutes. If it is necessary to hold the plants for a few days, wet the roots as stated and repack them loosely in the package or put in a pile with the roots inside with damp moss between the layers as in the original package, keeping the plants in a cool place. If it is necessary to hold them more than a few days, heel the plants in the soil. However, immediate planting insures the best results.

SOIL—While strawberries are widely grown on many types of soil, individual varieties show a marked difference in their response to varying soil types. Some varieties, such as Premier, are universally adapted and will do well on almost any soil. Others are more capricious and will vary from poor to excellent depending on the soil and the locality. Plenty of moisture is essential, especially just before and during picking. Soils rich in humus or organic matter are better adapted to hold sufficient moisture than are poor soils low in humus.

Plant on clean soil, free from weeds and grass. This will aid greatly in weed control.

PLANTING—Early Spring planting as soon as the ground can be well fitted is best. If delayed until late spring, the chances of heavy loss due to hot dry weather are much greater.

Set in rows $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 feet apart and 15 to 24 inches in the row. Sparse growing varieties, such as Chesapeake, should be set closer than free-growing ones, such as Premier, Dorsett or Fairfax. At these distances it will require about 8,000 plants per acre.

CULTIVATION—Cultivate frequently enough to keep the soil in good tilth and to control weeds. Weed control is absolutely essential to successful berry growing.

Some of the more free-growing varieties tend to set too many plants for the best results. Experiments have shown that allowing only a limited number of strong, sturdy plants to set and removing all excess runners, will result in larger yields with a higher percentage of large, better quality berries.

Blossoms should be removed from the newly set plants as they appear.

MULCHING—Late in the fall the berries should be mulched to prevent heaving during the winter. Marsh hay, straw, leaves, strawy manure or any like material may be used. In the spring, the bulk of this mulch should be raked off the plants and put between the rows. This will aid in conserving moisture, a most important item in strawberry production, and in weed control. It also keeps the berries cleaner.

Prices and Supplies

Several factors have combined to bring about higher prices for strawberry plants this spring. In addition to the general rise in all prices, there is a real shortage of strawberry plants this year due to hot dry weather conditions last summer and fall in the principal plant producing areas. It is estimated that the total supply of strawberry plants available is 50 per cent or less of normal. Production costs are also up due to sharply higher labor costs.

This plant shortage means that late buyers are likely to be disappointed. Order your plants early as soon as you know what you want and we will reserve your plants until shipping time.

SPRING VARIETIES

Early

BOUQUET—Bouquet makes a limited number of large vigorous plants bearing a heavy crop of large, good quality berries whose uniform shape and size and bright red color make them attractive indeed. Its chief fault is its lack of adaptability to all soils and conditions. With us Bouquet has been an outstanding berry with an exceptionally long picking season and outyielding Premier in some years. Ripens shortly after Premier.

DORSETT—Dorsett is at its best a little farther South and with us it does not equal Premier or Fairfax in yield though excelling both in attractiveness with its very large bright red beautiful berries. The berries do not darken but hold their bright attractive color long after picking. In quality it is above average being excelled by Fairfax alone. Since Dorsett is a vigorous grower setting a heavy row of plants it responds well to thinning or spacing of the plants. It ripens just after Premier.

FAIRFAX—This grand berry surpasses all varieties we have fruited in firmness and in quality. With us Fairfax ripens a few days after Premier and equals or excels Premier in yield. The berries are very large, glossy, dark red in color with a tendency to become more so as they ripen. Though some consider this dark color a fault, we find that, as soon as our customers are acquainted with the superb quality of this wonderful berry, its dark color becomes an asset as they can distinguish the Fairfax berries from other varieties and are willing to pay a premium for them. Fairfax has one of the longest fruiting seasons of any variety.

PREMIER—As the leading commercial variety, Premier owes its popularity to its wide adaptation to soil and climate, its extreme earliness and to its heavy yields of large uniformly well shaped, bright red reasonably firm berries which hold their size well to the end of a long picking season. With us Premier withstands drought better than most varieties. Quality good. Plants vigorous and disease resistant.

New varieties come and go but Premier still remains the most popular variety grown. You will make no mistake in planting it.

Mid-Season

CATSKILL—Catskill has truly leaped into prominence for, in the short time since its introduction by the N. Y. Experiment Station, it has become a leading mid-season variety over a wide area in the northern half of the country. This deserved popularity comes from its big yields of very large, good quality, bright red, firm berries which, while irregular in shape, are nevertheless, attractive in the basket. Catskill is frost resistant and a sure cropper and makes a good stand of healthy plants. One of the highest yielding and largest sized berries we have grown.

CULVER—A healthy, vigorous growing, heavy yielding variety producing beautiful large, uniformly conic shaped berries which are dark red to the center. One of the most attractive strawberries. Somewhat tart but of good quality. Highly regarded as a freezing or canning berry. With the exception of Catskill, Culver is probably the best of the varieties developed by the N. Y. Experiment Station.

DRESDEN—Recently introduced by the N. Y. Experiment Station, Dresden is worthy of trial by all berry growers. In two years' trial we found the berries to be very large and the yields enormous, fully equalling Catskill in both respects. The berries are fair quality, a little soft, conic in shape, smooth and uniform and of a medium red color. The plant's characteristics are of the best, being large, healthy and making a good stand.

NORTHSTAR—Northstar is a seedling of Premier and Red Heart. The berries are large, firm and of an attractive bright red color. In quality Northstar is very good and has a pleasing flavor and aroma distinctly its own. It takes a moderate number of plants which for size and vigor are the best we have ever seen. With us yields are a little light.

Late

ABERDEEN—A vigorous growing, heavy producing variety that is more resistant to heavier wet soils than most varieties. Berries large, light red and very attractive. Moderately firm and of fair quality. The Aberdeen has been increasing in popularity.

BLISS—A berry of supreme quality, being excelled only by Fairfax among the berries we have grown. A good yielder of good-sized, uniform, well-shaped, bright red berries appealing to the eye. Worthy of trial for either commercial or home use. Bliss is one of the best drouth resistant varieties.

CHESAPEAKE—Long grown as a fancy late berry; fine quality. Large in size and a pleasing glossy red color. Very firm and a good shipper. Makes a limited number of strong, stocky plants. Requires a rich moist soil for maximum performance.

EVERBEARERS

In general, the culture of Everbearing varieties is about the same as for spring varieties. However, the beneficial effects of early setting and plenty of humus in the soil are even greater in the case of everbearers.

Everbearers will produce berries the first fall after they are set. The blossoms should be cut off until mid-July in order to give the plants a chance to make a vigorous growth before fruiting. This system will give more berries of larger size in the fall. Plants so handled will come into bearing about mid-August and will bear until cold weather.

GEM—The berries of Gem are large, and hold their size well during the season. Quality and yields are good. In the basket the large, smooth, uniformly shaped berries with their glossy bright red color are indeed attractive. Gem compares very favorably with the old favorite, Mastodon, in size, yield and quality and surpasses it in attractiveness.

MASTODON—The most popular and profitable everbearer. Plants stocky and vigorous. Berries large to very large, bright red and very attractive. Good quality and a heavier yielder, both in the spring and the fall.

Prices

No. of Plants	Prepaid		Charges Paid By Purchaser				
	100	100	200	300	400	1000	5000
Spring Varieties	\$1.25	\$1.00	\$1.80	\$2.55	\$3.20	\$ 7.50	\$35.00
Everbearers	1.50	1.25	2.25	3.25	4.25	10.00	47.50

Plants shipped prepaid through the fourth postal zone only.

If of one variety 50 at 100 and 500 at 1,000 rates.

Each variety must be figured separately.

Stamps (1, 2, and 3 cent) accepted for amounts less than \$1.00.

Five per cent discount on orders received and paid for before March 15, 1942.

Prices subject to change without notice.

All plants offered subject to prior sale.

**CASH MUST ACCOMPANY ALL ORDERS UNLESS
OTHER ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE.**

References: Postmaster, or Citizens Bank, Clyde, N. Y.

ORDER BLANK

W. E. Benning

Clyde, N. Y.

Please Write Plainly

Do not write here

Amt. sent

Ck M.O.

Stamps **Cash**

Shipped

Date _____

Send To

Post Office **State**

R. D. or St. _____ County _____

Express Office
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Ship By Express () Parcel Post () Ship About

IMPORTANT! SUBSTITUTIONS. As the digging season progresses we frequently run out of some varieties. Please indicate whether, in case we are out of the variety ordered, we shall substitute something equally good or return your money. Any plants substituted will be marked by their true name. Unless an answer is indicated below, we shall feel free to substitute if necessary.

ANSWER

